



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY URGES MOTORISTS TO PROTECT CHILD PASSENGERS**  
*National Child Passenger Safety Week is Feb. 11-17*

**RALEIGH** — Gov. Mike Easley today urged motorists to remain diligent about properly securing their children in child passenger devices, including age- and size-appropriate car seats and booster seats. He also encouraged citizens to participate in child passenger safety clinics being held across the state Feb. 11-17 as part of National Child Passenger Safety Week.

“Using correct child safety or booster seats and installing them properly will help keep children safer in motor vehicles,” Easley said. “I urge parents, grandparents and other child care providers to take advantage of the resources available to educate them about child passenger safety.”

North Carolina law requires everyone in the car to be buckled up, but children younger than age eight or who weigh less than 80 pounds must be properly secured in an age- and size-appropriate child safety seat or booster seat. Children may be secured in a properly fitted seat belt at age eight, regardless of weight, or at 80 pounds, regardless of age, whichever comes first. The vehicle driver is responsible for proper restraint of children, regardless of their relationship to the child.

In 2005, a total of 74 children aged seven and younger were seriously injured and 26 were killed in motor vehicle crashes in North Carolina. Law enforcement officers reported that at least 27 of those child victims were not restrained.

Safe Kids North Carolina, a program of the N.C. Department of Insurance, provides technical training to traffic safety advocates and outreach to families statewide. In conjunction with National Child Passenger Safety Week, local Safe Kids coalitions will be conducting child passenger safety clinics to provide low-cost safety seats to qualified recipients and help families learn how to use them correctly. The N.C. State Highway Patrol also conducts child safety seat clinics and will assist parents or caregivers with installation of seats by appointment at local Patrol offices.

For maximum child passenger safety, parents and caregivers need to remember and follow the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s *4 Steps for Kids*:

- 1) Keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible up to the height or weight limit of the particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until at least age one and at least 20 pounds;